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TAGS: [SENV](#) [KSCA](#) [AORC](#) [UNEP](#) [NO](#)  
SUBJECT: Norway's view on U.S. CITES Proposal

REF: SECSTATE 06668; JOHANNSEN - WOOD (OSLO/OES) E-MAIL OCT 7 2009

¶1. (U) Ministry of Environment and Development Senior Advisor Mette Svenningsen told PolOff February 3 that Norway would not be prepared to comment on reftel until the end of February. She said the GoN would host a discussion February 15 with Norwegian NGO's to encourage their input for the upcoming Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) COP-15, after which there would be an internal GoN meeting February 17 to finalize positions for COP-15.

¶2. (U) Although the GoN is not prepared to comment on the U.S. proposals, Econ LES was told by Norwegian Directorate for Nature Management Senior Advisor Oystein Storkersen October 7 (ref B) that the GoN would not support moving the polar bear from Appendix II to Appendix I for three main reasons:

-- Any increased protection of the polar bear should be handled through the Agreement on the Conservation of Polar Bears, not CITES.

-- In order to be placed in Appendix I, a species must face direct, projected extinction. The current argument for moving the polar bear up is based on changes in the external environment (melting sea ice). While the GoN recognizes the melting sea ice trend, they say that it does not present a direct threat to the polar bear and that data on the issue is lacking.

-- Of the countries with polar bear populations, Canada and perhaps Greenland are the only ones that permit trophy hunting. The GoN thinks Canada has a satisfactory regulatory system in place, and that Canada is capable of regulating its own trade.

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